



Skywriter...



July 2011



Jack Currie's new Zenair CH-801 was one of only two aircraft that braved the high winds and low ceilings to fly into the Carstairs Fly-In on June 18th.

From the Cockpit

By Robin Orsulak

It sure is nice to be in the midst of summer... that's what I say! With July underway there are so many things going on and I am happy to say that this month has been very good already with a number of events having taken place and more to come. As of this writing I have seen a number of club members out at fly in breakfasts, Arlington and the Airdrie air show.

Having this in mind, there are still a number of event's still to attend. Some of you will be going to Oshkosh and I'm looking forward to your return and to hear of the adventure's experienced. There is also the Lethbridge air show being held July 23 – 24. Don't forget that the Abbotsford air show takes place August 12 – 14 and perhaps I will see some of you folks at either of these events as well.

I would like to thank club member Barry Wood in advance for his efforts in getting us a tower tour out at Springbank which will be held August 11th at 6:30 PM. This is sure to be a great event planned for our club members.

So overall I'd say we have lots of things to do and that doesn't even begin to touch on the adventures many of you are having out there in your flying. Most of you know that we are on summer break and that we do not have any regular meetings during July and August, but for some of our new friends out there, don't let that prevent you from coming out to the many fields that we fly out of and pay us a visit!

In the meantime... stay safe, have fun... and take along a friend!



Calgary Recreational and Ultralight Flying Club

COPA Flight 114

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Skywriter

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CAVU Dreams

By Ken Beanlands

SUMMER IS HERE!!!!

It's been a long wait for us Calgarians, but we've finally been blessed with some true summer weather. Fortunately for me, I booked the first week of July for vacation. We had originally planned to do a flying vacation to Terrace BC, but due to a number of reasons, we decided to spend the week at the lake. However, it was still going to be a flying vacation!

On Friday, July 1st, we loaded up and made our way to our cabin near Bashaw. Renée took the trusty Subaru along with the dogs and our gear. I headed for Carstairs and saddled up in the Christavia. Interestingly enough, we both left the house at 11 AM and both ended up at the Bashaw airport at 2 PM. So much for flying being faster ☺. Granted, I did chat with Glenn Bishell for a while, and I did make a dog leg over Ponoka to take in the Stampede.

Of course, Saturday morning was Bob Kirkby's 20th Annual Fly-In Breakfast. I was up early and in the air by 8:30, after a hesitant engine start. I assumed that the battery was starting to fail. I usually keep the battery plugged into a BatteryMinder in the hanger, but tied down in Bashaw, that was not an option. Oh well, the hour or more trip to Chestermere should be more than enough to charge it up.

It was a pretty good turn out at Bob's place with about 15 airplanes showing up, 120 breakfasts



served and \$305 raised for the COPA *Freedom To Fly* Fund. Bob doesn't charge anything for the fine breakfast he provides, but he does ask for donations.

With a full belly, I decided it was time to head back to Bashaw. At around 11 AM I hit the starter expecting the normal Franklin roar, but getting a disappointing click instead. Of course, I was in a great place for a problem to happen. Before long, Stu and Carl were hauling out tools, hauling on props and wiring me up for a jump start. Unfortunately, it quickly became obvious that the battery was just fine and it was the starter that was pouted.

No problem I thought, only three nuts hold the starter to the engine and it was easily accessible. I had replaced the Franklin starter with a SkyTech about four years ago and the serviceable original was still on the shelf at home. In a couple of minutes the starter was loose, but not out. Something started to emerge from my memory. When I replaced the starter there was a big label on the starter warning the installer not to engage the Bendix before installing it. With the Bendix engaged, it would NOT fit in the engine. This meant that it wouldn't come out with the Bendix engaged either. If you hadn't guessed by now, the starter was engaged! We made a valiant effort to remove the starter, but it became obvious that the only way to get it out was to spin the starter up to 300 RPM, which meant starting the engine.

We put everything back together and tried restarting the engine with Stu doing a LOT of pulling. Eventually, we flooded it so I opened the throttle and closed the mixture. Three pulls later and she fired and with a quick flick of the wrist, I had it idling smoothly. This whole process would have been a lot easier if Stu didn't have to pull the engine against the starter.

I headed up to Carstairs where I had a car and my tools to replace the starter. Fortunately, the starter disengaged on start-up and it took about 5 minutes to remove it once I got to Carstairs. After a trip back to Calgary for the starter I was again sitting in Chrissy with fingers and toes crossed as I turned the key. It started with gusto! My original plan was to be back in Bashaw by 2 PM. It was 8 PM when I walked in the door! A big thanks goes to Stu, Carl and Bob for helping me out and for a



great Fly-in.

Monday evening I took up a neighbor for a flight and ended up learning tons about the local area. She knew most of the farms and residents we toured over. She loved the flight, but I think I got more out of it than she did! It certainly helped that it was a wonderfully calm evening.

Tuesday, I flew to Lacombe to meet with Steve Whitenect to check out his new Glastar. Steve and I have been good friends for years, first meeting in Newfoundland in '89 where we were both building Christavias together. He's been my wingman to Oshkosh in '05, '06 and '08. The plan was to meet for lunch and take a quick run around the patch in the



Glaster. Everything went well until we went to turn at the end of the runway after landing in the Glaster. The brake line popped off with a bang. This time, the fix only took three hours, but when Steve left, everything was working fine.

Wednesday evening was another passenger flight; this time with one of the local teenagers who is extremely interested in flying. Since I needed fuel, we headed up to Camrose and then did a tour of the lake on the flight home. I had noticed a Beaver ultralight flying over the lake on the nice evenings but did not know where it was based. As we flew over

the south end of the lake Matt pointed out the bright yellow Beaver tied down on the shoreline buried in the trees. Alongside it was a short strip cut out of the grass and extending onto the beach. The next evening I walked down the beach and found the airstrip and Beaver. The plane was a little rough, but it did sport the registration C-IDHC. I doubt that this beaver was built by DHC (in other words deHavilland Canada). The strip was about 1200' x 50', making it a possible landing strip for the Christavia. With only a 3 km walk to the cabin, this would be pretty neat.

Unfortunately, the forecast for the area was looking pretty poor for Thursday, Friday and Saturday in the Camrose/Bashaw area. Thursday morning, I took the plane home to Carstairs and drove back up for the last couple of days. This turned out to be a wise decision. A supercell hit Thursday evening, the same one that dumped baseball sized hail and rumors of funnel clouds between Sundre and Red Deer. Friday and Saturday were very windy with winds near 60 kts on Friday night.

In all, I logged 10.2 hours over the week. I turned out to be a great flying vacation and a great primer for the big one next week: Oshkosh!

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Flying Misadventure

By Ken Beanlands

So, my adventure starts with a troublesome engine starter. For the past few months I had noticed that the engine was hard to start on occasion. I thought at first it was the battery, but the symptoms indicated something different. When engaging the starter, the solenoid would click, but the starter wouldn't turn. This would happen a few times but then it would click and start fine. This led to the conclusion that either the starter was failing or the much cheaper solenoid was the culprit. A flying buddy of mine, Ralph Inkster, had a new one he could spare so I bought it from him.

Thursday evening, June 23, was warm and calm so I took my newly acquired solenoid and headed north to Carstairs, where I keep the Christavia. On the drive north, I noticed a Cessna 120 idling in front of a small homestead on the west side of Highway 2 just south of Crossfield. I had noticed the farm there before and had even noted the "T" hanger like building, but didn't realize a Cessna 120 hid in inside. I had driven past the farm hundreds of times before so I was a bit surprised that it was there. As there was no easy way to pull in, I simply filed it as an interesting fact that would need further investigation at a later date.

I arrived at my hanger and got to work on the solenoid. What should have been a 20 minute job stretched into an hour when I realized that the holes from the old solenoid were about half a diameter out from those on the new one. Of course, this would have been a quick fix with a drill, but I had taken home the drill I usually leave in the hanger and forgotten to return it. Instead, I had to file the mounting hole into a slot with a rat-tail file taking considerably longer especially when curled up at an awkward angle under the panel. With that job done, all that was left was to test the new solenoid. The easiest way to do that was to go flying, of course ☺.

The weather was calm with a 5 knot breeze out of the south and blue skies overhead. There had been talk of a front coming through, but I assumed that had already passed as there was a line of thunderstorms on the eastern horizon about 30-40 miles away. A few cumulus clouds were building to the west, but nothing looked worthy of worry.

I decided to go for a quick run to Olds/Didsbury, about 10 miles north and practice some circuits. On my third take-off, I remembered the Cessna 120 I spied earlier and decided to head the 20-25 miles south and check it out. As I passed by Carstairs, I noted that the cumulus clouds had grown a bit more

and had moved closer, but they still didn't appear threatening. I continued south to the spot I sighted the 120 and found the farm again. Sure enough, just west of the highway was a trim little north/south airstrip. I circled a few times and noted that the hanger doors were closed so I turned my sights back to Carstairs. The cumulus clouds had turned into one cloud that was looking a little black underneath with some light rain falling over the town of Carstairs, about a mile or two west of the airstrip. I flew through the rain shower before turning east to cross over Carstairs's 34/16 grass runway.

All along I was keeping a close eye on the ponds and lakes below to gauge the wind speed and direction. It remained a steady 5-10 knots out of the south. Without too much concern for the winds, I crossed center field and joined a left downwind for 16. I had considered doing a bit more flying, but figured it would be better to get on the ground and get the plane back in the hanger before it started to rain there.

Flying a normal circuit I turned final and passed Alex Fox's home, which sits about a mile north of the button to 16. The windsock in front of his house was still showing a 5 knot southerly breeze. As I got to the half mile final point, the plane was hit by a freight train out of the west! The plane bucked up about 100' and the right wing went up into a 45° bank! The plane started drifting rapidly to the east and towards the trees and hangers that line the east side of the strip. 30° of right crab straightened out the plane and a glance at the sock revealed a 30 knot wind out of the west! There was no way the Christavia could handle that, even with a super-pilot at the controls!

Fortunately, there is a crosswind strip at the south end of 16/34. I continued in the overshoot and climbed reached about 500' AGL half a mile south of the end of 16 before turning to join a left downwind for 25. Unfortunately, the sky had opened up with rain at this point. I still had good visibility of about 5 miles through the hardest of the rain, but forward visibility through the rain-swept windscreen was severely restricted.

Once on downwind, I glanced at the airspeed indicator which showed 60 knots. The GPS showed 95 knots giving me a 35 knot wind. Fortunately, it would be right on the nose for landing. With that sort of groundspeed, I had little time to think on downwind or base, but when I got established on final (with only a 20-25 knot groundspeed) , I had all the time I needed to assess the situation and my options.

Before I continue, I have to describe the approach to runway 25. From the button ahead to where it intersects the button of 34, the runway slopes

downhill about 30' in about 300'. This is wonderful when taking off, but not so great when landing. From the button heading east is another hundred feet with the slope continuing up another 10' to the road. Along the east side of the road are the power lines! Although marked with balls, it still makes for an interesting obstacle. Finally, the windsock sits in the northeast corner of the runway intersection. The runway is about 1500' long, which is usually plenty as it's only used when a strong crosswind makes 34/16 unusable.

And so with this in mind, I came up with a plan. With good visibility out of the side windows, I'd continue the approach, watching the power lines out the side. The runway was visible but obscured through the 65 knot rain pounding on the windshield. Fortunately, I've used the runway enough to have a good idea of what I was seeing without needing the details. I planned on continuing the approach feeling out the turbulence as I got closer to the ground. If I was too high or it got too turbulent, I'd overshoot and head west out of the area and find a strip nearby to lay up until the weather passed.

Despite the adrenaline coursing through me, the approach was progressing surprisingly well. I passed the power lines with about 50' to spare and continued with the approach. By the time I passed the windsock, I was about the same height as the sock putting the wheels about 10' off the ground. Using the front windshield to make sure I was lined up with the runway and the side windows to gauge my height, I flared at the right height and settled onto the ground with a surprisingly gentle touchdown. With only about 20 knots of groundspeed when I touched, I was stopped in about 150', even without the brakes. I sat there for what seemed like an hour (although it was really less than a minute) and waited for the pulse rate to slow and to gather my wits.

Next came the taxi. I had to backtrack 25 and then taxi nearly the entire 2800' of 34 to get back to the security of the hanger. In my mind came the teachings of my father and his insistence of using the controls to ensure that the tail remained planted on the ground and the windward wing would be forced down. The 180° turn to backtrack 25 held two surprises. First was just how easily the plane handled the now 40 knot winds. The second was to discover that I was only 250' from the intersection, the same intersection I had passed at 10' above the ground! Boy, did I ever stop short.

The crosswind taxi up 34 continued to prove quite stable. There were a couple of moments where full rudder and brake were needed to keep her straight, and on a couple of occasions I felt the left wing start to lift a bit, but it was quite manageable. As I made the turn onto the ramp I thought I saw a figure

through the rain streaked windshield, hunkering in the lee of the big hanger. As I kicked the plane west in front of my open hanger, I realized that the figure was Mike Sweere coming to help. I quickly shut down and exited the plane; anxious to push it back in the hanger before the wind permanently jammed it in! As I climbed out I heard Mike yell "That was CRAZY!!!". Usually the uphill push to get the plane back in the hanger is a bit of a strain, but between the adrenaline still pumping through me, and the 40 knot wind helping us out, it went in very easy. From shutdown to hanger door closed couldn't have been more than two minutes!

The rain stopped about 10-15 minutes after I had the plane in the hanger and the winds subsided to about 20 knots out of the west but the temperature had dropped a good 10°C. In hindsight, it was obvious that the front, which I thought had passed through earlier, had just hit with a vengeance. About once a year during the summer we get a fast moving cold front out of the west that clips along at 30-40 knots. Often they are marked by an extreme wind speed increase and direction change along with a murky yellow cloud of dust that it picks up off the ground as it passes over the farms. Since it's been unusually wet this spring, the normally dry air was quite moist allowing this cloud to grow from a few small cumulus clouds to a full grown cell in a matter of 20 minutes, directly over the field. Being directly underneath it, I couldn't see just how tall the cell was growing and how dangerous it was becoming.

And dangerous it was. Here in Calgary, 30 miles south of Carstairs, the winds associated with the front knocked over trees! However, there were no thunderstorms here. Fortunately, my story ended well with a renewed confidence in both my skills and the abilities of the stout little Christavia. With only about 1000 hours total and with less than 600 on the Christavia, I am by no means an experienced pilot, but I guess I've developed enough skill (along with a good dose of luck) to dodge the bullet on that landing!

Oh, by the way, the starter solenoid proved not to be the fix for my starting issues... but that's another story.

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FLYING EVENTS

WEEKLY Lethbridge, AB – The Lethbridge Sport Flyers (COPA Flight 24) would like to invite you to our weekly Saturday morning breakfast, 7:30 am, held at Smitty's Pancake House, 2053 Magrath Dr. S. in Lethbridge, Alberta. To contact us please call our club President, Brian Wilson 403-345-6603 or send us an email at Lethbridge-Sport-Flyers@telus.net.

MONTHLY First Thursday of every month High River Airport (CEN4), AB – EAA Chapter 1410 Monthly Meeting at the Dueck Hangar the 18:30hrs to 21:00hrs. Come by and visit! Please contact Paul evenings at 403-271-5330 or eaahighriver@shaw.ca or visit www.eaahighriver.org for more details.

July 16th, Athabasca, AB (CYWN) – Fly In BBQ. We are hosting our first Fly In BBQ from 11-3 on July 16, 2011. Open to pilots and public alike. Athabasca Airport, Lon -113.20114 Lat 547.73651. For more information, please email Nicole McDonald nmcdonald@athabascacounty.com

July 16th – 23rd, SK – A John Lovelace flight. Join The Century Flight Club this summer as we return to the air with over 100 Airplanes for the “100 Aircraft

Adventure 2011”. This is the third annual flight organized by the Century Flight Club of Canada. The Chairman of the 2011 flight is again TV host and Pilot John Lovelace. Returning Flight Marshals Peter Lubig and Dave Qualley. For more information or register for this tour please visit our website at <http://www.crosscanadaflight.com/>.

July 17th, Vulcan, AB (CFX6) – 36th Annual Vulcan Flying Club Fly-in breakfast. N50 24 17 W113 17 00. Greatest Fly-In breakfast in southern Alberta! Commencing 0800 - 1100 local. Lots of parking and fuel available. For more information please contact Norm E. Kristjansson 403-485-2791, cfiwc@telus.net.

July 22nd – August 1st – CRUFC AirVenture Air Adventure 2011. Departing Firday morning, the plan is to arrive in Oshkosh by Sunday, July 24th and depart on July 29 or 30 for the return trip taking advantage of the holiday Monday. Count on about 25-30 hours of flying. Currently, three aircraft are confirmed with a couple of more possible all are welcome. For more information, please contact Ken Beanlands at kbeanlan@telus.net.

July 22nd – 24th, Edmonton, AB (CYXD) – COPA Flight 176 invites you to Indy Weekend. Fly in for breakfast Friday, Saturday & Sunday 7:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. (Hangar 39, City Centre Airport), then take in race events all afternoon. For more information, please contact indyflyin@copaedmonton.ca or Eugene at 780-974-1303.

July 23rd, AJ Flying Ranch (CAJ7) – Joe English Memorial Fly-In Breakfast. Pancake breakfast from 8 AM – 10 AM and lunch from 11 AM – 1 PM. Under wing camping available July 22-23.



FOR SALE

July 24th, Fairview, AB (CEB5) – COPA Dunvegan Flight 174. Northern Alberta's only Fly-In Breakfast from 8 a.m. to 12 noon MDT. Donations accepted. Celebrating the 65th birthday of Fairview Airport. Tour of the Fairview Restoration Society CANSO aircraft. For more information, please phone 780-835-2432 or email ian.macdonald@telus.net.

July 25th – 31st, Oshkosh, WI (KOSH) – The 59th annual edition of EAA AirVenture 2011 held at Wittman Regional Airport.

August 6th, Nelson, BC (CZNL) – Nelson BC's Annual Flight-Fest is hosted by COPA Flight 87. Nelson Muni N 49 29 39 W 117 18 02. Begins at 8 a.m. with our famous Fly-In breakfast! Antique, Classic, Homebuilt, Military and Warbirds will be on display all day. Lunch at the airport with an afternoon airshow. For more information please contact Case Grypma cgrypma@gmail.com

August 11th, Springbank, AB (CYBW) – Springbank Control Tower Tour. Bob Miller the Site Manager, has graciously offered to give CRUFC members a tour of the Spingbank Control Tower. The tour will be at 6:30 on August 11th.

August 14th, Westlock, AB (CES4) – COPA Flight 139 Westlock Flying Club annual Fly-in breakfast. 7:00-10:30AM. 11:00AM Airshow by Barry Pendrak. For more information, please contact George at 780 349 1094 or email sfg@telus.net.

August 20th, Black Diamond, AB (CEH2) – The RAA and the CuNim gliding Club are having a Fly-In/Drive-In breakfast at the CuNim Gliding Club Airport. \$5 each for members and their families, \$10 for non members. All welcome.

August 27th, Medicine Hat, AB (CYXH) – The Gas City Aviators, COPA Flight 171 is having their 3rd Annual Fly-In Brunch from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Fresh Southern Alberta corn on the cob & hotdogs. PIC's eat free! Alternate date is August 28. If you have questions, please contact Doug Thompson at 403-928-4909.

August 27th, Rocky Mountain House, AB (CYRM) – Fly-In Breakfast. Hosted by Rocky Flying Club from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. For more information, please contact Kurt Magnus at 403-845-5506.

September 5th, Stettler, AB (CEJ3) – COPA Flight 135 Stettler Flying Club's annual Fly-In Breakfast Labour Day Monday. All you can eat pancakes, eggs, ham & sausages from 8:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. For more information, please contact Henry Johnson at 403-740-6415 or e-mail ohana@telus.net also Garry Fix at 403-742-6104 or email gagafix@gmail.com

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Continental O-200 For Sale: Complete firewall forward package including engine mount and prop. 650 hrs SMOH, recent new cylinders, mufflers, carb and ignition harness. Can be heard running, currently in a C-150 awaiting an O-320 transplant. \$10,000.00 Call Glen at 403-648-8910 daytime or Doug 403-498-9522 any time. (04/11)

1991 Macair Merlin (BULA): 782 hrs TTAF, Rotax 503 DCDI, 172 hrs SMOH, dual controls, \$18,500 OBO. Arnim Haase, (403) 240-1183, ah1183@telus.net (05/11). →